

Washington, DC – Today, the House of Representatives voted 331-92 to pass the [Expedited CARD Reform For Consumers Act of 2009 \(HR 3639\)](#)

. This bill would move up the deadlines of a variety of the consumer protections contained in the

[Credit Card Accountability Responsibility and Disclosure \(CARD\) Act of 2009 \(HR 627\)](#)

, which was signed into law May 22, 2009. Congressman Charlie Gonzalez (TX-20) released the following statement on the bill's passage.

“We passed legislation by Congresswoman Carolyn Maloney to protect credit card holders from the unreasonable and even unconscionable practices by some credit card issuers.

Unfortunately, some credit card issuers have increased their abusive practices, hoping to beat the effective date of Congresswoman Maloney's legislation. The bill we passed today would not allow credit card companies to circumvent the consumer protections intended by the previously enacted legislation.”

The CARD Act, commonly known as the Credit Cardholders' Bill of Rights, provided three different periods of time after which its provisions would go into effect: three months, nine months, and fifteen months. Thus, several provisions took effect on August 20, 2009. Rather than beginning to shift towards acceptable practices under the new law, reports show that [banks have continued or increased the soon-to-be-prohibited lending practices](#)

. Credit card interest rates are reported to have [increased as much as 30%](#)

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HR 3639 would make the [remaining provisions](#) take effect immediately. (As introduced, the bill would have set a new deadline of December 01, 2009, but an amendment from Congressman Dan Maffei (NY-25) modified that to “the date of enactment”.) The only exceptions would be for pre-paid gift cards, as many of these have already been printed or distributed, and for credit card issuers with fewer than 2 million accounts.

The expedited provisions include:

- Prohibition on double-cycle billing, where interest is charged on debt that is paid on time;
- Making over-limit programs, and their related fees, opt-in; and,

- Limits on fees charged for non-use of gift cards.

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